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Speech at Newburyport, Mass.

Gordon



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SPEECH
OF
GEN. GEO. H. GORDON,
DELIVERED
AT NEWBURYPORT, MASS.,
OCTOBER 28, 1868.

GENTLEMEN: At a meeting of the citizens of the Fifth District at Salem, on the evening of the 16th of October, I gave a general description of through whom, by what means, and for what purposes supplies from the Department of Virginia and North Carolina, while under the command of General B. F. Butler, were poured directly into the departments of the Rebel Commissary and Quartermaster, on the right bank of the Chowan, and up the Nottaway River as far as the rebel station at Murfrees Depot.

I then stated that the ring which controlled this nefarious traffic operated through four concerns known by the names of Renshaw & Co., McKay & Co., Geo. W. Lane & Co., and C. C. Pool & Co. I further stated that the real parties in interest were Benjamin F. Butler, commanding the Department, Fisher A. Hildreth, of Lowell, his brother-in-law, Geo. W. Lane, and J. C. Sanborn.

I traced the connection of Butler with this ring, by his active and interposing agency in carrying out to the letter a corrupt contract for continuing this rebel trade, made by his brother-in-law Fisher A. Hildreth, with a trader convicted of traffic with the enemy, and sentenced to be confined in the Penitentiary during the remainder of the war, and to pay a fine of one thousand dollars, by which contract, in consideration of large profits, Hildreth bound himself to see that the convict's case went right with General Butler. And I showed you that after Butler had been discharged from duty in the field, and while on his way to Lowell, he remitted the sentence of imprisonment, thus assuming a power of which he had been stripped, and using it to continue the shield of his protection to make the convict's case go right, by warding off the penalty.

And I further showed you that during a period of four months after his trial and conviction, the convict, in the interest of the ring, had been permitted by Butler to carry on his trade of pouring supplies into the depots of the rebel army in exchange for cotton.

Those of you who have read the remarks I made in Salem on the 16th instant, will perceive that it was necessary, in each of the concerns through which the ring operated, that some one of the rebel agents or some one well known to the rebel agents should become interested, and also that a control over those agents should be exercised by the commanding general of the department, that thus their best supplies might be secured. Having shown how this was done in the case of Charles Whillock, whose testimony was referred to as given before the military commission; I now propose to show you how the same influence was offered by the George W. Laue, and Fisher A. Hildreth, members of the ring, in the case of a convict, one Logan Hunt, who also was pardoned by Butler, after he (Butler) had been sent in disgrace to Lowell by General Grant.

But first let me show you something of this rebel trade from General

Butler's Department. And to do this, I shall not now rely upon any testimony taken before the military commission of which I was president; but will read to you from the printed report of a committee of the House of Representatives of the thirty-eighth Congress ordered to investigate the subject of trade from rebellious states, upon motion of Mr. Driggs of Michigan, in the following words.

"Whereas it is reported that one George W. Lane of Baltimore received a permit in December last from H. A. Risley chief agent of the treasury, to proceed to North Carolina and exchange provisions with the rebels for cotton; therefore, Resolved etc."

On motion of Mr. E. B. Washburne, of Illinois, this duty was further extended to inquire into the general subject of trade with rebellious States. In the discharge of that duty the committee appeared at Norfolk, Va., after Butler had been dismissed from the field, and some time in the early part of 1865, and there examining witnesses under oath, elicited the testimony I shall now quote.

First I shall show you that the enemy were fed (and how it was done) from the department commanded by General Butler, during the months of May, June, and July, 1865. The first evidence of the fact to which I shall invite your attention is that of Mr. Geo. W. Singleton, sworn before the committee of the House of Representatives, while in session at Norfolk, Va. Here is the book [showing it] and on pages 139 and 140, Singleton's testimony. The examination was conducted by Hon. Elihu B. Washburne, of Illinois, as chairman, in session at Norfolk, Va., on the 13th February, 1865.

To a question by Mr. Washburne, "Have you been trading with the rebellious States?"

He answers, that Mr. Logan Hunt asked him to engage in trade with him, that he got on his horse and went out into Currituck and other counties in North Carolina, and although he understood there could be no trade stores established beyond the picket lines, when he got to South Mills, he found that he was beyond the pickets, and so he kept on as far as Elizabeth City, (about 20 miles outside of our picket line) and saw that stores were doing business there.

Question.—(By Mr. Washburne.) Did you find a good many trade stores about there?

Answer. Two that had been at South Mills, were removed to some other place. When I got to Elizabeth City I found there were two stores there.

Q. What forces had possession of Elizabeth City?

A. It did not seem to be in possession of any forces; either side could come in as they chose.

Q. Were they large stores?

A. Yes.

Q. Could the rebels trade at those stores in Elizabeth City?

A. Oh, yes, I believe there were eight or nine carts came in the next day with cotton. There was a plenty of cotton there.

Q. Where did these carts bring cotton from?

A. They brought it from Edenton.

Q. What articles were taken back in return for the cotton?

A. Sugar, coffee and such articles.

Q. Where did these articles go to?

A. I do not know. These men brought the cotton and carried back goods.

Q. Did you see any rebel soldiers during the expedition, and, if so, how many?

A. I saw a good many on their way back to the army; some of them had been home on furlough, I understood.

Q. (By Mr. Perry.) Were any rebel soldiers guarding property there?

A. When I went in, I saw the rebel soldiers at South Mills; they had their cartridge-boxes, pistols and side-arms. I got into conversation with them, told them I was looking for a place to locate a store; they said they did not intend to interfere with any business I expected to carry on. I learned, before I got to Elizabeth City, that Captain Lane's (George W. Lane) boat was up the Chowan delivering goods. I stopped all night. This man remarked that the disposition of the people who carried goods there was not to retail them at all; they preferred to sell them by the quantity.

Q. What was the impression you gathered from what you saw in regard to this trade? Was it carried on to large extent? Did the rebels get from it a great many articles necessary to supply their army?

A. My impression was that it must have been a trade which went directly through, for there could not have been such a quantity of goods sold in the neighborhood. I learned from a young man there, who was formerly employed in my store, that they could sell all the goods that could be brought there. I asked him how they got away. He said they came from across the river and took them. He said it took two or three all the time to sell, and that some nights they were up until eleven or twelve o'clock.

Q. (By Mr. Washburne.) Did you see any other rebel troops there, than those you have mentioned?

A. No sir; only these.

Q. Did you know of any federal troops approaching while you were there; and if so, what became of these rebel soldiers?

A. There came a man running who said, "damn it, get out of here; the cavalry are just here now; if you do not get out, you will be caught." One of them ran into a smoke-house, and the lady of the house locked the door. The cavalry-men did not get off their horses, but went on down to Gatesville. After they had passed, he came out.

Also, the testimony of William G. Harrison, of Norfolk, Va.

Questioned by Mr. Washburne as to what he knew of the amount of goods sold in Norfolk within the last six months, to go into rebel states or to the trade stores beyond our lines, he says, "I do not know how many goods have gone out; but I think a right smart amount have gone. I have seen a good many lighter loads of goods start out; the major part of the goods that generally went out in these lighters was coffee, sugar and salt."

Also, the testimony of Logan Hunt, who says, in answer to Mr. Washburne's question, "I have carried out goods to South Mills. I carried out sugar, coffee, molasses, and some liquors. The first articles carried out were 3,000 pounds of bacon and pork, and the balance in groceries, dry goods, and such articles; they were carried to South Mills, about thirty miles from Norfolk."

Q. Did you carry any boots and shoes?

A. I do not believe I did many; carried candles; don't recollect the quantity of coffee; don't know how much sugar; the cargo amounted to between six and seven thousand dollars worth.

Q. Did any of these goods go outside of our lines?

A. *They all went outside.* I sold them for cotton. I think most of them went across the rebel lines. The traders said they wanted this meat to trade for cotton.

Q. With whom did they expect to trade? Was it with the rebel commissaries upon the Chowan River?

A. There were rebel commissaries there. A man by the name of I. R. White, whom I formerly knew in this city, was one.

Q. Did you ever see White down at South Mills?

A. Yes.

Q. What time was that?

A. It was after the time when I carried goods there.

Q. In whose lines was South Mills at that time?

A. He said it was neutral ground; *it was fifteen miles inside our picket lines.*

Q. Were there no Union forces there?

A. No.

Q. What did White come there for?

A. He came there to partake of some refreshments. I did not know he was to be there at all. I expected Corpren (?) and Carr there.

Q. Who is Carr?

A. He is a trader who buys meat.

Q. Was not White a rebel commissary?

A. He came there in citizen's dress. I asked him what he was doing; he said he was stationed at South Key, and that he was a captain in the commissary department of the rebel army.

Q. Did you sell any meat to Carr?

A. I think I sold him not quite 12,000 pounds. He gave me a pound of cotton for a pound of meat.

Q. Did you ever have any other meeting or conversation with these men within rebel lines or on neutral ground, as you call it?

A. None at all. I have seen persons who said they were rebels down there and talked with them.

Q. You have spoken of a man by the name of Carr. Was he engaged in this trade?

A. Frederick W. Carr was engaged in the cotton trade. I bought cotton of him in the summer. He lives most of the time at South Mills. These memorandums [which were shown to the witness] are his accounts with the rebel government.

1864.

C. S. GOVERNMENT.

Dr

June 4.	To	262 pounds	Bacon.
		53	" "
		464	" "
		190	" Pork.
		563	" Bacon.
		2,153	" Salt.
		227	" Pork.
		50	" Bacon.
		6,355	" "
July 11.	2 Bbls.—	400	" Pork.
	8 "	1,600	" "
		275	" Bacon.
	10 "	2,000	" Pork.
		127	" Bacon.
		339	" Pork.

The next testimony to which I shall call your attention is that of the Judge Advocate of the department, who is interrogated by Mr. Washburne as to what he knows of trade with the rebels from Butler's department, and what he found out while he was trying men within Butler's department for that trade.

Q. (By Mr. Washburne.) From the facts which came before you in these cases, (which had been tried,) and from the testimony you have been able to procure in this department, what is your impression of the general trade carried on from Norfolk through the enemy's line and with the enemy for cotton?

A. My impression is that a large trade was carried on with the

enemy at South Mills, and at a landing about three miles from South Mills. My impression also is that a majority of the goods taken there found their way into the enemy's lines, and not only into the enemy's lines, but into the hands of rebel commissaries stationed on the other side of Chowan River; that is to say, such goods as were useful for rebel supplies, such as meat, sugar, coffee, etc.

Q. What was the rate of exchange for these goods at that time for cotton?

A. A pound of meat for a pound of cotton. It was proved in the evidence that the rebels had been guarding the Chowan river, and that they allowed no cotton to cross, unless they secured meat for it at some such rates.

Q. Then this trade, in your judgment, could not have been carried on to any extent without the connivance and assistance of the Rebel Government?

A. No, sir, it could not. No doubt some cotton was smuggled across the river by parties on the other side, but the rebel authorities would not allow it to cross in any considerable quantities.

Q. (By Mr. Perry, another member of the Committee of House of Representatives.) Did you have any evidence before you, by mark or otherwise, as to the former ownership of this cotton?

A. There was evidence that some of this cotton was marked C. S. (Confederate States); and the witness also adds that though some of the cotton might be smuggled across, no considerable amount of it could have been obtained without the consent of the Confederate authorities; that, in fact, the transactions were made with their agents.

It will now appear that though some of the men engaged in this infamous traffic were arrested, tried, and convicted of the same, yet they were allowed to continue it.

First, that some of the men were arrested, tried, and convicted. The Judge Advocate General of the department, being duly sworn before this Committee, testified, in answer to the following question by Mr. Washburne: "Have you had anything to do in this department (General Butler's) with the trial of persons engaged in unlawful trade with the enemy?" "that he was Judge Advocate of a Military Commission before which were tried six persons for trading with the enemy at South Mills; that their names were Enos Richmond, Ezra Baker, and Charles Whitlock, who sold goods at South Mills, at a branch store kept by a man by the name of Abbott; M. Dudley Bean, Logan Hunt, and Augustus Harney; that they were arrested for trading with the enemy during the months of May June, and July, 1864."

Q. (By Mr. Washburne.) What was the finding in those cases?

A. The finding, except in the case of Harney, who was acquitted, was, guilty of some of the specifications in each case. I do not remember whether they were found guilty of all the specifications in any case or not.

Now, I present to you evidence that, notwithstanding these parties were found guilty of trading with the enemy in contraband of war, not only did such trade continue, but some of the convicts themselves were permitted to continue the traffic during the ensuing fall and winter, and until General Butler was sent out of the department.

In the cases of Charles Whitlock and Ezra Baker, which were introduced by me in my remarks at Salem, we have seen, by evidence before the Military Commission, that they continued the same traffic in the interest of the ring, in the concerns of Renshaw & Co. and McKay & Co.

We now turn to the evidence of John T. Daniels before the Congressional Committee.

Q. (By Mr. Washburne.) From your knowledge of the transactions which have been carried on with the people of the rebel States, what in your judgment has the entire trade from Norfolk amounted to within the last six months?

A. For the month of December I feel satisfied there must have been \$1,500,000 worth of goods sent out. They have carried them up there day and night. Barges loaded with provisions have been continually going out, and it is reported that the rebels sent their boats down Chowan River and just took them off.

The testimony of the Judge Advocate of the department upon this point is as follows:

Q. (By Hon. Mr. Perry.) From the time of the commencement of these trials, during their progress, and up to this time (January 1865), as far as you know, have the same parties been allowed to continue the trade?

A. About a fortnight after the trial I was informed by two detectives that Richmond and Baker had gone down with a load of goods to South Mills, and I have since understood that the trade had gone on, though I know nothing of it personally. I instructed the detectives to investigate the matter and let me have such evidence as they could, as I proposed to try the parties again. I received a telegram from Colonel Saunders, Provost Marshal, saying they had gone down there. I told General Butler about it, and showed him the telegram, and he said he would attend to it.

Q. Have you any information that he ever did attend to it?

A. No sir.

Q. Have you any information that after that they went forward with the trade?

A. I know nothing personally about it at all.

Q. Have you any information in respect to Mr. Hunt continuing in the trade during the time of his trial, and up to this time nearly?

A. I have not, except by general rumor. I heard that the trade was going on. I have seen these detectives whom I have sometimes sent for in other matters, and they have told me that it was going on.

Q. As an officer of the Government did you not feel that there was great delay in the department in stopping this trade.

A. Yes sir, it was my opinion that there was great delay, that it ought to have been stopped, but I did not know where the fault lay.

Q. (By Mr. Washburne.) Did you see any difference in this trade after the trial of these men?

A. The information that I could give as to that is very slight, because I rarely came to Norfolk, probably not more than once a month, and I knew nothing more than what I have heard.

Q. What is your impression and belief from what you have heard?

A. My impression is that the trade was going on, but that impression was simply based on what these detectives told me.

In further corroboration we have the sworn testimony of Mr. Holiday, of Portsmouth, who testified that he could go at will from our lines to the rebel lines, and had been doing so, acting as an agent for the rebel contractors for the rebel armies. "I have seen passing over the Blackwater River goods in carts, and I have seen cotton coming this side of the river. It was understood generally that a great many goods came from Elizabeth City, and a great many from the trade stores. When I have been out I have always met carts, more or less, going and coming with cotton. I understood that some of the carts came across the river and went to Elizabeth City. I heard so. I un-

derstand there was a good deal of trade going on between Elizabeth City and Murfrees Depot. I think I have seen these carts, as many as seven or eight times altogether within three or four months, quite a number of carts each time. I have talked with a great many people about the matter, and they all say there is a great deal of trade between Elizabeth City and Murfrees Depot. I think a great many goods come over from Norfolk for cotton. I supposed our Government authorized it, by seeing so many goods go out. These goods began to go out there in November, I think; that was the first time I saw any goods on the other side of the river; sometimes I have met as many as six carts going; they were at the ferry; I think they would average about six or seven carts in a day. I think it is likely they go every day."

I shall now show you by sworn testimony that the traffic was allowed to continue notwithstanding General Butler's attention was frequently called to the fact that the cases of these men (sentenced to imprisonment) had not been acted upon; and that some of them were still engaged in the same business. The Judge Advocate of the department is questioned [page 142] by Mr. Washburne to know what became of the cases of the men he had tried for trading with the enemy, whose names I have already given you; to which he replies: "The records were forwarded by me to General Butler on or before the 20th of October, 1864. At that time they went out of my possession as Judge Advocate." He further states that he saw the papers various times in Butler's office, and that when Butler was relieved from duty by General Grant, he carried the papers off with him.

I shall now take one step further in this proof, and show you that this trade was allowed to continue, with an intention on Butler's part of pardoning the criminals if they gave their labors and effort in the same traffic to the best interests of the ring.

Having shown you in my former speech, and already alluded to the fact, in what concern the convict Whitlock, was permitted to operate (that of Renshaw & Co.) after his conviction, and that in conformity with promises of pardon made him by Butler's brother-in-law, his services were secured for a rebel traffic, and that Butler did pardon him. I now proceed to show you the same shameful pardon in the case of the convict Logan Hunt, that he might operate in the same shameful rebel traffic in the interest of the B. F. Butler, Geo. W. Lane, Fisher A. Hildreth, and John C. Sanborn ring.

In answer to a question from Mr. Washburne, of whether he had been engaged in trade with the rebel states, he replies that when Lane was preparing to make his second trip with the "Philadelphia" to the rebel depots on the Nottaway River, (of which I have given a partial description in my speech at Salem,) Lane urged him very strongly to go with him, telling him if he would go he, Lane, would make it all right. "I told him," says Hunt, "that I did not like to go, besides that I had been tried and that when the decision came to be announced, I might be imprisoned." He said he would make that all right with me if I would go. I asked him how he was going to do that. *I told him that I had confessed everything before the Commission,* and that they might find me guilty and imprison me for a long time. He said he would fix that. I asked him how he would do it. He said his influence at head-quarters was sufficient, that the findings of the commission had to be approved or disapproved by the general commanding before they were considered as binding. I asked him who he was; he said General Butler. I told him if he was certain of that fact, that I would go on board his steamer for that trip. I heard the other day that the commission sentenced me to two years imprisonment and to pay one thousand dollars fine, and that General Butler had revoked the imprisonment, but approved the fine."

"I understood you to say that after the trial you were put under bonds?" asks Mr. Washburne.

A. I was put under bonds when I came out of prison. I was put in prison before the trial.

Q. Have you been out under bonds ever since?

A. I gave a bond the last time for \$10,000 to appear there whenever the President, or Judge Advocate, or somebody wanted me.

Q. When was that last \$10,000 bond required?

A. Immediately after the commission rose, when the trial was closed, before I was allowed to go from Old Point.

Q. At what time was this last bond given?

A. I do not know; I think in October, sometime.

Q. Then I understand you that after this, and while you were out upon the bond, you went into this arrangement with Lane?

A. Previous to this time, Lane told me if I would go with him, he would make it all right.

"How did you understand," asks Mr. Washburne, (the chairman,) "that Lane would make it all right?"

A. It was through the influence at headquarters of Mr. Hildreth, brother-in-law of General Butler.

Q. Did he state that Hildreth was interested as a partner of his?

A. He told me Hildreth was a partner of his.

Q. To what extent?

A. He did not say to what extent. He told me, after pointing him out to me at one time, that Mr. Hildreth went to the front one day for the purpose of seeing General Butler about my case.

Q. What did he tell you was the result of that interview?

A. He did not tell me, and I do not know as I asked him.

Q. Did you not feel sufficient interest to ask?

A. He assured me all the time that it was all right.

Q. What compensation did Lane agree to give you at the time you went with him upon the "Philadelphia" on the 19th December?

A. He agreed to give me five cents a pound, and as a further consideration *to make this matter all right with General Butler; that was the greatest inducement, I would not have gone at all except for that.*

Q. Why did you think he could do it?

A. Because I thought he had great influence with General Butler.

Q. After you received this information from Lane in respect to your trial, did you expect to be relieved from your imprisonment and fine?

A. I expected that the sentence, whatever it was, would be revoked by General Butler, as I understood it was, so far as the imprisonment was concerned.

Q. Were you interested in some boots, shoes and hats, in this trip you took with Lane?

A. Lane told me if I would bring some shoes, he would make it all right with me.

Q. Do you know all the parties interested in that trip up the Chowan River?

A. No, sir, I do not. Lane told me he had to make ten dollars before he could have one dollar for himself; that Farrington (the cotton agent, who gave the permit) and Hildreth were partners.

Q. Did Upton see White on board the "Philadelphia"?

A. Yes, I think he saw the whole transaction. I do not think White transacted any business on board. He knew me and came on board, and we took several drinks together.

Q. Did you see Upton and White talking together?

A. I do not know that I saw them talking separately; they were all together on board the boat.

Q. How did you introduce White?

A. As my friend, Captain White.

Q. In what service?

A. I did not say in what service, but I supposed they understood that; he had on a rebel uniform.

I shall now show you that after the convicts gave their aid in supplying the rebel army with subsistence from Butler's department, Butler did remit their punishment, but after he was dismissed from further duty in the field, and while on his way to Lowell, excusing himself for such pardon on the ground that the President, Abraham Lincoln, had legalized that description of trade.

Mr. Washburne inquires of the Judge Advocate what was General Butler's action upon the sentence of fine and imprisonment of the convicts, (Logan Hunt and others) for furnishing supplies to the enemy in May, June and July of 1864. To which he replies, "he approved the proceedings, findings and sentence, and *remitted the imprisonment* because of the publication of the order of President legalizing that description of traffic."

He further testifies that Butler carried the proceedings away with him, and that owing to an effort he made to procure them, he received the papers from the War Department, all except the case of Mr. Dudley Bean, which case he has never seen.

He is further asked by Mr. Washburne, whether the action of Butler was of any validity upon them, to which he replies: "In my opinion the action of General Butler, having been taken after his removal from command, was not valid."

Mr. Washburne then asks "if there was any date or place appended to General Butler's remarks," to which he replies: "I think it was headed Head-quarters of the Department, but there was no date to it."

Mr. Washburne then inquires of Bean's case, and asks if he knows why that was not returned; to which he replies that he does not, but that he had a conversation with Bean after General Butler had failed to return it; that Bean came to his office and asked if any action had been taken upon the proceedings in his case. "I told him there had not." He wanted to know what had become of it; he wanted to know if it had been sent down here. I told him no, that the last I had seen of his case, it was in General Butler's possession, and that he had carried it away with him.

Mr. Washburne then asks if he expressed himself satisfied, to which is replied:

"Yes, sir; he appeared to be very much pleased."

And again, to the question, "How did you know that the order of General Butler in these papers was not made before he was relieved?" he answers: "Because I saw the papers after he was relieved, and there was no order on them."

Let us now examine this pretence that the executive order of the President authorized Butler to feed the rebels.

Did the executive order of the President legalize that description of trade? General Butler knew this was false. It was a sham device to soil the spotless robes of Abraham Lincoln. The President's order was dated September 24, 1864, and did not allow goods contraband of war, gold bullion and foreign exchange to be carried into districts declared in rebellion, to be exchanged for products of the country.

The men convicted by the Military Commission for trading with the enemy within Butler's department were found guilty of exchanging contraband of war with the enemy for cotton, in May, June and July of the same year of 1864. It was a crime *then*, it is a crime *now*, and has been one from that day to this.

But, gentlemen, I will not keep you many minutes longer. The hunt is almost up. Let me give you a few words more of evidence

before the Hon. Committee of the House of Representatives, page 136, testimony of John T. Daniels.

Question. (By Mr. Washburne, who is inquiring about the steamer "Philadelphia," after she was seized by the navy, at the time Butler alleges she had no contraband of war aboard, in the Spring of 1864;) "What became of the expedition?"

Answer. The steamer is now at Roanoke Island, as I understand under seizure by the naval authorities. I felt very cautious about going into the business. General Butler being interested as I thought in the contract, I presumed would send me out of the department, and my interests being all here, I did not desire to go.

Q. Why did you believe that General Butler was interested in the venture?

A. I understood Mr. Haliday, Lane's agent, so; and I learned afterwards that he was interested in all these privileged stores. Captain Johnson, late Adjutant-General here, was charged sometime ago with being connected with other parties in these stores, and with illicit trading. He offered his resignation, and General Butler accepted it. Captain Johnston told me that General Butler would not do otherwise than accept it, for that he, (Butler,) was interested in all these permits. A few nights ago, he, (Johnston,) came to see me at my house, and told me that he had been before this military commission, but that he had not told them all he knew, as he thought they amounted to nothing; that he thought they would not take cognizance of the matter, as what was done was by General Butler's order; but that if he could come before a congressional committee, he would show that General Butler was a partner in all their transactions, and that he was represented in them by John Sanborn.

Q. What was Johnston's position in the army?

A. He was Adjutant-General to General Shepley.

He was charged with being connected with these parties, and just after the investigation at Fortress Monroe, the officers told me that he was forced to offer his resignation, or he would have been punished. His resignation was recommended by Butler. He afterwards told me that General Butler had given him authority as special agent to superintend these trade stores around this district.

Q. Did he say how much money he had made?

A. He did not tell me. He said that John Sanborn represented General Butler's interests, and that Hildreth was also interested with Lane.

Johnston is put forward as one of Butler's affidavit makers against me and my rule at Norfolk.

Let me, gentlemen, before closing, having done with the printed testimony, turn your attention to other damning evidence against Benjamin F. Butler, member of Congress from the Fifth Massachusetts District; and though not in managing a ring engaged in traffic with the enemy, it is in most suspicious circumstances of spoliation of one of his own victims at New Orleans. The claimant, Mr. P. H. Foley, of New Orleans, a very respectable merchant and of undoubted veracity, has made to these facts his affidavit which can be forthcoming if desired. At the surrender of New Orleans Mr. Foley was in the city, a merchant, took the oath under the proclamation of General Butler; also of citizenship. No complaint was ever made against him. As factor he had advanced a large amount of money to a planter living on the coast not far away; and received directly from the planter a lien upon the sugar. Under the proclamation his business and personal security were guaranteed. He carried on the place and received permission to go up and down the river from the provost marshal.

There was held in the place some \$80,000 worth of sugar, held for a market, and until sold, kept in safety there.

Some eight months after the surrender, he was informed by the overseer of his place, that his sugar had been seized by *Colonel Butler*, under the military authority, and conveyed to New Orleans. He found the steamboat at the landing commanded and guarded by military officers and soldiers under Colonel Butler. On demanding his sugar and exhibiting his papers, he was informed that the sugar had been seized by order of the commanding general, for the use of the United States, and was sequestered or confiscated, — and that without a hearing or any military complaint. The soldiers in the boat were under military orders, and the application was refused. A day or so afterward, he was visited by a broker and informed that the sugar had been seized by the United States for its use, and he could of his own motion get nothing; *but, if he would sell and execute a bill of sale, he would get so much.* Thinking that better than nothing, it was done; he got the money and Colonel Butler the sugar, which went north to Boston. The United States did not get it. How did the Colonel get this out of the hands of the United States, or get the steamer, officers and soldiers to move it, without the authority of the commanding general (Butler)?

So it is, gentlemen, that from all over the land, wherever Butler ruled, the evidence of his crimes and of his oppression comes thick and fast to confound him.

And who was it but Butler that permitted it? He knew its existence when he ordered the Commission to try Charles Whitlock, Ezra Baker, and Logan Hunt. He knew they had been found guilty, or might have known it, for his attention was called to it repeatedly, while they were engaging in the same traffic with his brother-in-law, Fisher A. Hildreth, a partner, though without supplying capital.

Did he know that Hildreth and Lane had promised the convicts the pardon of General Butler if they would devote themselves to the interest of the ring, in the same traffic of contraband of war, with the enemy? or when he did pardon them was it a coincidence?

And now, gentlemen, excuse me if I turn for a few moments to the peculiar method which General Butler adopts to clear himself from the serious charges which I have made and proved against him. I am not on trial before my countrymen, and therefore I might well pass them by in silence. The shallow device of turning attention to me in seven or eight columns of his own perversions and untruths, and affidavits of men whom I have shown had engaged in sustaining the enemy with subsistence during our late civil war, when the very existence of our national life was so seriously threatened, is too transparent. It is a confession of his guilt, and must be so accepted without the additional proof, which I have offered you to-night, from sources over which I had no control, and therefore could neither exaggerate nor suppress.

I might, too, contrast my character, public and private, with the historical career of Benjamin F. Butler. That nothing venal can be charged or sustained against me, though I fell him (?) to the rich mine in which Butler gleaned at Norfolk. may be, to his mind, evidence as satisfactory of my guilt, as his inference that, though he could find no evidence of venality in the Hon. Mr. Fessenden and others, who refused to impeach the President, this, of itself, was sufficient to convict them of being corrupted by Woolley's gold. Indeed, what logic is impossible to him who charges all the murders committed of late at New Orleans upon those who invited Mr. Fessenden to a public dinner in Boston, to thank him, with hearts filled with devout gratitude that he had saved General Grant from the additional responsibilities of entering upon an

administration that followed one in which B. F. Butler had been prime minister for never so short a period?

In worldly treasures Butler is, I confess it, my superior. Before the war there was not so much in his favor. In a public speech made by one of his friends during the canvass it was declared that Butler was now worth three millions of dollars. This admission, in the face of suspicions which attach to him wherever in the civilized world the character of Butler is known, an admission made public to aid his cause, I accept as true. His pay during the war could not have exceeded sixteen thousand dollars.

Where the attempt is made to attack my military reputation such a gross ignorance of the rules and regulations is shown in the effort that one would suppose the distinguished reporter had originated the matter himself. Wherein it is said that I was starving in the army it is simply silly. But I cannot enter in detail into all the untruths Butler has uttered, in private and in public, affecting myself. If I had known that he would have bought up every supplement of the *Daily Evening Traveller* until the next presidential election, and filled them with affidavits until he had exhausted his three millions, I should not have been deterred from exposing this bold, bad man. In every line Butler has written there is either a suppression of the truth, or a wilful misstatement thereof. All this talk about dismissal from the service by a court of his brother officers, and all about the cashiering which Butler has repeated at many meetings in his district, he knew of course to be, and intended to utter a falsehood. I now defy him to produce such a record. If he does not I publicly declare that he stands convicted of the ungentlemanly habit of telling wilful falsehoods.

In the same category but without the inciting motive, stands Dr. Geo. B. Loring, of Salem, who rushed in hot haste after my first exposure of Butler, to repeat, in defence of his master, Butler's malicious slander. I send him greeting — my defiance to produce such a record; and if he fail, declare him the utterer of a base slander and a baser falsehood. Having given Dr. Loring an opportunity to make a public retraction, which he has thus far avoided, I shall brand him as publicly as he attempted to defame me. I leave my military reputation where General Grant puts it when he wrote the letter of the 4th of July, 1866, already published, in which he gives one of the real reasons why Butler was sent to Lowell in disgrace. And at that time too, gentlemen, and more than one year before the 4th of July, 1866, General Grant had seen some of these foul affidavits. They were worked up by Butler when he lost the opportunity of distinguishing himself further at Dutch Gap, and with his Powder Boat at Fort Fisher, or in the exercise of that organizing talent in regulating trade with the enemy; they were worked up and sent to me from the Headquarters of the Army. I returned them, declaring the statements unfounded, and showing that they were made, some of them, by convicts whom Butler had allowed to escape, some of them by men whom I had caught in trade with the enemy, and then held for trial. That was the last I heard of it, and shortly after I secured Brevet of Major-General by General Grant's recommendation. But thinking it possible General Butler might some time attempt for some other purpose to repeat the deceit, I directed my Provost Marshal to report to me how these convicts and traders were treated while in confinement, to which he responded in the following report, concerning the affidavits by Messrs. Whitlock, Baker, Renshaw and Lane, of their treatment while held in arrest for trial upon charges preferred by the commission, of trading with the enemy.

OFFICE PROVOST MARSHAL, DISTRICT OF EASTERN VIRGINIA,
Norfolk, Va., June 12, 1865.

The representations of these petitioners concerning place of confinement and treatment while confined are in the main false.

Messrs. Whitlock and Baker were, I think, held in city jail two or three days. With this exception these persons were never in jail, our hard labor prison, or our guard house, while they were held in arrest. Rooms in the building used for my headquarters, occupied by my clerks and orderlies, were vacated for these men while prisoners. The rooms were usually clean, and made more comfortable for the prisoners than they were for my assistants.

I feel confident that there were no "vermin" in these rooms when these petitioners occupied them, and hope there were none when they left.

These persons were allowed to have any provisions and all luxuries that they ordered, or that their friends sent them. In several instances they were permitted to go to their homes and there remain under guard.

After the first few days they *were* allowed to see their friends in presence of an officer, and they *did* see their counsel before they were admitted to bonds.

I hold myself ready to make oath to the foregoing statement at any time.

(Signed)

O. L. MANN,

B'vt. Brig. Gen'l. and Prov. Mar., Dist. East Va.

Official Copy.

F. L. HARRIS, A. A. G.

At that time, too, after the commission had adjourned, there was but a single affidavit (Charles Whitlock's) of the use of profane language to witnesses. I was then able to meet it by a counter affidavit from the clerk to the commission, who was present during all its sittings. It is as follows:

HEAD-QUARTERS DISTRICT OF EASTERN VIRGINIA,
Norfolk, Va., June 19, 1865.

I, S. S. Houghton, do hereby affirm that I was present during the examination of Charles Whitlock before a military commission at Norfolk, Va., of which Brigadier-General Geo. H. Gordon was President, and also affirm that to the best of my knowledge and belief, the said Whitlock was not at any time during the examination called by General Gordon a damned liar.

S. S. HOUGHTON, *Clerk for Military Commission.*

Sworn to and subscribed, before me, this 19th day of June, A. D. 1865.

M. C. GREEN,

1st Lt. 2d Art'y, Judge Advocate Dist. Eastern Virginia.

Wherein I am accused by other convicts and suppliers of subsistence to the enemy, of using strong language, I leave such charges where a virtuous community ought to leave them, if the inmates of a state prison should file affidavits against the judge who sent them there.

But wherein the reporter Rockwell whom I trusted to report the testimony of the military commission investigating the subject of trade with States in rebellion, adds his evidence to the list of affidavit makers, he brands himself. Almost before the ink was dry upon his notes, he hastens for money to transcribe, it seems, the matter, for the head of the ring, Benjamin F. Butler. He, Rockwell, the man receiving a large salary through my approval, asking and receiving besides many favors for his own personal comfort, sitting daily as a sworn reporter to record the testimony against a foul nest of contraband traders with the enemy; this man in the interest and pay of Butler is brought forward, with his presence to grace the list of scamps who have committed wilful perjury for their masters. And yet Rockwell was "late representative to the legislature."

There remains now but one topic more for discussion; yes, two: First, that I saw, for the first time, a long list of silly charges and specifications in the *Traveller*. The whole file may have been on the table of the Hon. Charles Sumner, when he told me that they were

presented by General Butler, but that he had not looked at them, and did not mean to. This was in 1867.

At that time, these affidavits had increased in volume from the four paltry ones which were presented through Butler while I was in command at Norfolk and he in Lowell. And now they have grown again and will, doubtless, continue to swell in volume as the occasion calls for them. On Butler's principle of accusation, with false affidavits from his minions, and unblushing falsehoods from himself, what might he not do against himself, if he should ever part company with Satan and turn State's evidence?

The other point is the assertion of Butler that General Grant, after Butler was dismissed from the field, ordered the fine of \$2,000, imposed by General Palmer against Lane, to be remitted, his boat returned, and the proceeds of the sale of his property restored to him. I defy General Butler to produce any genuine evidence that this was done by General Grant, save by the procuration and representations of Butler himself to authorities in Washington from whom the order emanated.

Wherein General Butler states that he refused Geo. W. Lane a permit to trade, and that General Shepley took out of Lane's boat everything in the shape of provisions, he again perverts the truth.

Here is his permit:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY OF THE JAMES,
DEPARTMENT OF VIRGINIA AND NORTH CAROLINA,
Fortress Monroe, May 4, 1864.

Geo. W. Lane, Esq., has permission to pass through the Currituck Canal and Albemarle Sound, in Chowan County, N. C., with a cargo of ploughs, harrows, trace-chains, ropes, twine and such supplies as cannot be of use to an army, and to bring back a return cargo of cotton, tobacco, and other products of the country.

This permit is given on the express condition of forfeiture of goods if found in any way affording aid or comfort to the enemy, except by trading with peaceable inhabitants in goods not contraband of war, or of use to the army.

BENJAMIN F. BUTLER, *Major-General Commanding*

And the following will show what this virtuous pretence was intended to cover:

EDENTON BAY, N. C., June 27, 1864.

SIR: After Mr. Lane obtained your permission to proceed to Edenton Wharf to dispose of his goods to proper parties, in accordance with the trade regulations, on last Tuesday night, a lot of his goods were landed at the wharf at Edenton to a Confederate Government agent. I have good authority for saying, Friday night, some goods, or part of them, were on their way to the Confederate army, all of which was done without my permission.

It is out of my power to carry out the trade regulations according to my instructions, and ask to be relieved from its duties on this occasion, and very respectfully ask if you will have Mr. Lane to report to you with Steamer "Philadelphia," that you in your good judgment can properly dispose of the case.

The goods comprised tea, corn, coffee, sugar and whiskey.

With high consideration,

I am, truly your friend,

E. H. WILLETT,

Local Agent Treasury Department.

Capt I. P. BANKHEAD, *Commander.*

This note was written upon the occasion of the first attempt at traffic of the "Philadelphia," after she had received a permit from Abraham Lincoln to trade in ploughs, seeds, and trace-chains; and after she had been permitted

by General Butler to pass through his department into a region occupied at will by the enemy's commissary agent.

Does Butler mean to say that after Lane left Norfolk he took on board a cargo of contraband of war? Where did he get it? It must have come through Butler's department! Did he not know it? Where is that great administrative power, which made him so famous at New Orleans, so keen after the gold and jewels of his subjects?

But he did know it. The Cargo of the "Philadelphia" was purchased in Baltimore in the name of Charles Whitlock the convict, under the auspices and aid of John D. Sanborn who sent to Lane the following note under an assumed title.

OFFICE OF THE ADAMS EXPRESS COMPANY,
84 Washington Street, Boston, Saturday, April 9, 1864.

I come on from New York, and go back to-morrow. I expect to see you in Baltimore by Wednesday. I trust that you sent steamer so that we may have no delay in starting on arrival at Fortress Monroe and Norfolk.

Truly, etc., CHICAGO.

[See page 153, Report of House of Representatives]

And in the interest of one B. H. Morse, the Butler-appointed treasury agent, who has added his affidavit to the columns of the *Traveller* in Redpath's budget; his note to Lane is as follows:

NORFOLK, FEBRUARY 3, 1864.

FRIEND LANE: The authority came to hand last evening O. K., and the certified copy also.

I have no news to communicate, but am expecting some every day. I will come when necessary, or you can come down if you think best. Did you get the bonds for wife? She can send the money at any moment.

B. H. MORSE.

And the packages of molasses, coffee, etc., etc, which were bought in Baltimore to go through Butler's department to the rebel agent, are to be found page 50 report of committee of House of Representatives investigating subject of trade with rebellious States.

I must call your attention to another subject that more fully illustrates the animus of these affidavits and their falseness.

Of the charge of withholding charity from the orphans of St. Mary's Orphan Asylum, — when an application was made to me for this charity I sent the communication to my commissioner for the poor, a very worthy and humane gentleman, to report upon their needs. Here is his reply:

OFFICE COMMISSION FOR THE POOR,
Norfolk, Va., April 1, 1865.

Brigadier-General Geo. H. Gordon, Commanding Department Eastern Virginia:

GENERAL: I have the honor to return herewith three communications marked A, B, C, relative to certain supplies to be furnished as charity to St. James' Orphan Asylum of this city, and to report that, by the assistance furnished by Government, and aid given by individuals, the Asylum has received at least \$7,000 within the last year, in currency. There appear to have been forty children cared for, taking the above sum as the gross receipts for their support (an average expense per year of one hundred and seventy-five dollars.)

The average expense to the Government for all the persons (adults and children) in the counties of Norfolk, Elizabeth City, and Princess Anne, cared for and supported by the Commission for the Poor, is not over forty dollars per annum.

The impression I have received is, that St. Mary's Asylum is, for the present at least, abundantly supplied with means for its maintenance and comfort.

I have the honor to be very respectfully

Your most obedient servant,

GEO. T. CARNEY,

Major and Quartermaster.

For Commission for the Poor.

The evidence against General Butler from sources that he cannot defile are conclusive of his guilt.

Supplies from his department were going out to feed the enemy in May, June and July of 1864. The men who committed the offence were arrested, tried, convicted and sentenced to imprisonment. But supplies to the enemy from his department still continued with increased vigor. The very men who had been tried shared in the transactions and in the profits of the traffic. The fact that they were doing so, and that he had not acted upon their cases to confirm their punishment, was more than once brought to General Butler's notice but without avail; a corrupt bargain (in favor of his brother-in-law and the ring) that he should shield them upon the valuable consideration of a continuation of their services in the same nefarious traffic in which (in the words of General Canby in his testimony to the committee) "they bartered the cause for which the army was fighting, with all the baseness of Judas Iscariot, but without his remorse," was carried out by General Butler, in that he did shield them by remitting the sentence of their imprisonment.

And thus the traffic continued through August, September, October, November and December, until stopped by General Grant's interposition.

Were the enemy fed from the department of Virginia and North Carolina while under command of General B. F. Butler? General Grant says *they were!* Our investigating committee of the House of Representatives reports that *they were!* A military commission ordered by General Grant to investigate the matter adds its *aye* to the high authority already quoted.

Did Butler know it, and allow it, and share it, and grow rich out of it? Then by the 56th article of war he should be shot!

Art. 56. "Whosoever shall relieve the enemy with money, victuals or ammunition, or shall knowingly harbor or protect an enemy, shall suffer death or such other punishment as shall be ordered by the sentence of a Court-martial."

Did he not know it? Then he proves his incompetency as the commander of a department; and for the wrong, and injury, and suffering he thereby caused, he ought to be hung. He may hang on either horn of the dilemma that pleases him.

General Grant with great humanity sent Butler to Lowell. His exploits: Dutch Gap; the powder-boat; and Fort Fisher; and his administration of his department could not save him. He had capered about fantastically on foot and on horseback, and made a great deal of noise; but at last, tired of him and his pretentious assertions, General Grant dismissed him in disgrace from further operations with the army.

You are to judge, Gentlemen, whether such a man should represent your district beyond the time which expires on the 4th of March next.

My duty is done. The honor, the welfare, the life of the State is in the hands of the people. There is but one rule of action. Let each citizen so live and act and vote as if upon him alone rested a responsibility for the nation's life.

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